

decorators of the Renaissance were the first artists in ornamental art: they suffered no limits or restrictions but those of harmony or beauty.

The Cinque-cento is the most perfect of all the modern styles, the most prominent style of the sixteenth century, and the real goal of the Renaissance. The varieties just spoken of are but its wanderings by the way. These came at last out of the excavations of ancient monuments at the commencement of the sixteenth century. The true spirit of ancient art was only now thoroughly comprehended; but with such capacities as those of Raphael, Julio Romano, or Michelangelo, no wonder that it started suddenly from its entombment into new life, and grew even into a more splendid development than it had ever known, perhaps, in the most gorgeous Roman period. The efforts of these masters, however, were at first little or no improvement on the works of the great Quattrocentisti, Perugino, Francia, Bernardino, Luini, and Pinturicchio. The Arabesque is the most prominent feature of the Cinque-cento. With this it combines in its elements every feature of classical art in its completed form, with the unlimited choice of natural and conventional imitations from the entire animal and vegetable kingdom, both arbitrarily disposed and combined. Another of its features is its beautiful variations of ancient standard ornaments, as the Anthemion especially. The guilloche or spira, the fret, and the acanthus scroll are likewise favourites, and occur in many varieties. The Cinque-cento, indeed, appears to be the special province of the curve, for the vortical, of rare occurrence, hitherto, is now constantly met with. The curve occurs occasionally as a simple screw: some guilloches are an intersection of two vortical curves: it is an admirable ornament for the representation of light and shade. It is in sculpture, perhaps, that we must look for the purest examples of this style, as regards the mere elaboration of form. The admirable play of colour in its arabesques and scrolls constitutes another chief feature in Cinque-cento ornament; the three secondary colours, orange, green, and purple, performing the chief parts in all the coloured decorations. The excellence of the best Cinque-cento designs, the lecturer thought, was much indebted to colour, because the primary are so subdued by comparison.

For a century after the development of the Cinque-cento there was little individuality in the practice of ornamental art: architecture itself was completely dominated by a mere classical pedantry. Towards the close of the 17th century, however, the Louis Quatorze, essentially an ornamental style, began to develop itself. Its chief aim was effect by a brilliant play of light and shade; colour, or mere beauty of form in detail, having no part in it whatever. This style, like most others of modern times, arose in Italy. Its great medium was gilt stucco-work, which, for a while, almost wholly superseded decorative painting; and this absence of colour in the principal decorations of the period seems to have led to its more striking characteristic, infinite play of light and shade. Exact symmetry in the parts was no longer essential, and came, in the Louis Quinze modifications, to be systematically avoided, and ultimately led to that debased version of this style, the Rococo. In the Louis Quatorze and its varieties we have the constant and peculiar combination of the scroll and shell, the anthemion treated as a shell, and a small scroll, sometimes plain and sometimes clothed in acanthus foliations. All its other elements are classical, such as in the Cinque-cento: the fiddle-shaped combination of scrolls is perhaps a legacy of the ordinary renaissance. The play of light and shade in sudden and varied contrast is so essential an element of the Louis Quatorze styles, continued the lecturer, that they do not admit, I believe, a single flat surface in any of their ornamental details: all are concave or convex,—perfectly smooth, but never flat. They thus contrast very strongly with the Elizabethan, in which flat surfaces in the details abound. In the Louis Quatorze these would be channelled or moulded. Still the latter is not altogether unfit for decoration in the flat, but it must be limited to designs on a small scale, and colours

will be indispensable: this is exemplified by the designs of Watteau. These are the last of the historic developments of ornament.

In this review of the ornamental devices of thirty-three centuries, said the lecturer, in his concluding remarks, we have certainly had every variety and expression with which the human mind is familiar, I have dwelt, of course, upon the leading styles only, and do not pretend to have explained more than the great leading developments of ancient, middle-age, and modern art.

In the early period, with the Egyptian, we found symbolism, richness of material, and simplicity of arrangement, or artistic crudity, as the prominent characteristics. In the second, or Greek, period, we have general beauty of effect, and uniform excellence of detail throughout, everywhere displaying the highest artistic skill. In the Roman period we have equal skill, with a taste for a more gorgeous detail and general magnificence. In the Byzantine we go back to an almost fanatically exclusive symbolism, which, however, in the course of a century or two, is elaborated into a style of a very gorgeous general effect, partly owing to richness of materials; but as prejudice was gradually overcome, a comprehensive and beautiful style is developed; yet always displaying more skill in its general effects than in its details. The Saracenic is the same in principle,—a gorgeous general effect without any peculiar merit of detail: it is made up of an infinite number of minute contrasts of light and shade and colour,—something like a formal flower-garden, wanting the simplicity and grandeur of natural scenery. In the Gothic, again, the last of the middle-age styles, symbolism divides the field with art, and induces much of that crudity of detail which must be the inevitable result of a divided attention. In the Renaissance, the herald of the modern styles, we have, at first, the natural vagaries of an unaccustomed freedom, which, however, eventually settled into a *bona fide* revival of the most finished style of antiquity, the Cinque-cento. Then came the final decline—mere love of display—gold and glitter: such is the Louis Quatorze,—still prodigiously clever in the means it took to accomplish its effects. The Louis Quatorze is more general in its aim than any style whatever: thus its details, provided they generated sufficient contrasts of light and shade, were of no individual consequence. Accordingly, we find, after a little time, that all detail is absolutely neglected, and, with it, all study; and in the absurd Rococo, the very natural result of this general neglect, we have designs made up of details no without meaning and individuality as to defy description. They are Rococo: we can come no nearer to them; and with this Rococo, the first term of existence, the last of the nine lives of ornamental art, expires.

With the nineteenth century has commenced a new existence for art, which promises well from its decided recurrence to individuality of detail: with a careful study of the elements, variety of detail will give variety of effect to the general arrangements: without this, our schemes will differ only in size or shape, but never in expression or effect. If we turn from the Rococo to our modern specimens from the works of Klenze and Gartner, at Munich, we see at once the value of a studied detail,—the difference between the schooled and the unschooled style. This, I believe, is the great lesson we are to learn from a study of the characteristics of styles. Our designs want individuality: they are too general—too much alike: we require something more than mere sprigs and colonnades: we want systems of detail, and systems of arrangement: a picture is not an ornament; but every flower, however simple, and indeed every leaf, is capable of being converted into an ornament, by the mere aid of repetition on a geometrical basis; and the same forms may be beautifully varied by judicious combinations of colour. Take a mere serpentine line, for example, clothed or foliated at regular intervals with any compound leaf, and in a colour complimentary to its ground, you have a very excellent and simple ribbon pattern. Every leaf chosen will produce many different designs, all admirably adapted to the desired object, and all the work of a few minutes only. Such is the value of system in ornamental design, concluded the lecturer; but it is only by a knowledge of the

characteristics of styles, the standard types of all ages, that even system will insure that variety and individuality of design which alone will secure permanent success.

ON LINEAL EXPRESSION AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN.*

THE SUBLIME AND THE PICTURESQUE.

So many have written on beauty, and it is such a vexed question, that I shall not treat further of it; but there is one quality so important, and generally so cavalierly treated, that I must say more about: that quality is Picturesqueness. This is a very general expression indeed of European use, and calls to my mind the works of Salvator Rosa—icebergs, rocks, ruins, withered trees, things jagged, irregular, angular.

Now, I think it can be shown that this quality bears more affinity to the sublime than to the beautiful, and frequently forms an important attribute of it.

The ancient Greeks were masters of the beautiful: they perfected it, up to now, in itself purely and in all its varieties. In their most majestic effects there is little, if anything, of that undefined terror which is justly held to be one of the essentials of the sublime. Repose is the pervading idea of all their noblest statues,—the Hercules, the Saturn, the Olympian Jove, the river gods at the Vatican, the Theseus, the Ilyseus, and, more strangely still, the Laocoon.

The very dreams of the race were benevolent. Terror was a quality of which they seem to have had no national comprehension, and considering this as essential to sublimity, I can fix on no work of theirs which perfectly produces that quality; and the same occurs as regards the picturesque: not that they never touched on the two, for the Laocoon possesses certainly sublime features, and the Drunken Fawn, Cymbal-player, and many of their rural gods and demons are picturesque, but in both cases it is a mixed quality combined with the beautiful, which is generally predominant. To find these characters more perfectly exemplified we must turn to a later race, and a later method of expression. How intimately the two are connected may be seen in Schiller's poem of the "Diver." The group above, the diver himself, the scene, a rocky promontory, are unmistakeably picturesque, whilst the scene in the whirlpool itself is full of mysterious terror, and essentially sublime, the two forming one perfect composition to the imagination.

In Shelley's "Alastor" we have the same excellent combination of the two qualities:—

"Lo! where the pass expands
Its strong jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems, with its accumulated crags,
To overhang the world; for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars and waning moon
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracts and vast, ro'ld in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-colour'd even; and fiery hills
Mingling their flames with twilight on the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,
In naked and severe simplicity,
Made contrast with the universe. A pine,
Rock-rooted, stretch'd athwart the vacancy,
Yielding one only response at each pause
In most familiar cadence, with the bow,
The thunder, and the hiss of homeless streams.

One silent nook was there,
Even on the edge of that vast mountain,
Upheld by knotty roots and fallen rocks."

The distance here is unmistakeably sublime, mysterious, vast, and awe-inspiring; whilst the foreground, though not without sublimity also, is stronger in the picturesque, with its pine, rock-rooted, its homeless streams, knotty roots, fallen rocks, and accumulated crags.

The same with the Alps; Mont Blanc itself being sublime, whilst the mountain pine, the broken branches, the twisting stream—rock-divided, the wooden chalet, with its breaks and galleries, and the goats on the jagged declivity for the foreground, are merely picturesque. Substitute a weeping willow or aspen for the pine, a Normal Italian villa for the cottage, a stream meandering through grass-enclosed islets, the swan's home for the rocky burn, and some sheep on an undulating hill in place of the goats, and the sublime character of the whole would be materially